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Citation for published version (APA):

Golob, A. (Accepted/In press). Exemplars, Institutions and Self-Knowledge in Schopenhauer as Educator. *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 1-26.

Citing this paper

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Exemplars, Institutions and Self-Knowledge in *Schopenhauer as Educator*

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ABSTRACT: As Janaway observed, “the topic of *Schopenhauer as Educator* is really education rather than Schopenhauer”; indeed, Nietzsche described it as addressing a “problem of education without equal” (*EH* ‘Books’ *UM*.3). This article reconstructs the pedagogical challenge and solution presented by Nietzsche in that text. It is obvious that Schopenhauer’s example is meant to underpin Nietzsche’s new pedagogy: what is less obvious is how exactly that exemplary role is meant to work. I concentrate on three issues: the exact nature of the pupil’s relationship to the exemplar, the institutional context of education, and the links of both to self-knowledge. Throughout I use as a foil a thinker who discussed these questions at length and who is in many ways Nietzsche’s unspoken target throughout *Schopenhauer as Educator*: Immanuel Kant. We need to understand, in short, “what, after Kant, Schopenhauer can be to us” (*SE* 3).

KEYWORDS: Education, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Examples, Exemplars

As a face in the mirror, so the morals of men are easily corrected with an exemplar.

Petrarch, *Rerum memorandarum libri*.¹

As Janaway observed, “the topic of *Schopenhauer as Educator* is really education rather than Schopenhauer”; indeed, Nietzsche described it as addressing a “problem of education without equal” (*EH*, *Untimely Ones* 3).² This article reconstructs the pedagogical challenge and solution presented by Nietzsche in that text. It is obvious that Schopenhauer’s example is meant to underpin Nietzsche’s new pedagogy: what is less obvious is how exactly that exemplary role is meant to work. I concentrate on three issues: the exact nature of the pupil’s relationship to the exemplar, the institutional context of education, and the links of both to self-knowledge. Throughout I use as a foil a thinker who discussed these questions at length and who is in many ways Nietzsche’s unspoken target throughout *SE*: Immanuel Kant. We need to understand, in short, “what, after Kant, Schopenhauer can be to us” (*SE* 3, p.141).

Before proceeding, a few remarks on the scope of this paper. First, many of the issues reoccur in Nietzsche’s later work: one could write a parallel piece on the pupil/exemplar

relationship in *Zarathustra*, say. However, to keep a clear focus, I limit discussion to *SE* and texts closely linked to it chronologically and thematically, such as the 1872 Basel Lectures.

Second, my focus differs from that of the existing literature on *SE*. That literature concentrates on Nietzsche's alleged "elitism": in response to Rawls, Cavell and Conant offered readings of *SE* more in tune with democratic sensibilities, emphasising Nietzsche's remark that every person constitutes a "unique miracle" (*SE* 1, p.127).⁴ Recent commentators have shown how complex such debates become: Rowthorn and Jonas defend readings on which some form of cultural hierarchy may benefit all orders of a society, may be entered into willingly by at least some of those in subordinate roles, and need not imply political injustice.⁵ However, my interest is not in that type of ethico-political issue, but in the pedagogical process itself. Why and how should *an exemplar* ground the "liberation" *SE* promises? How does *SE*'s understanding of the exemplar's role differ from that of earlier philosophers or from that of "monumental history"? What are the institutional or epistemic implications of prioritising exemplars as a means of cultural renewal? These are the type of questions I address.

Third, my main concern, following Nietzsche himself, I argue, will be with a certain form of education: the education of the philosopher. Why this focus? The answer is that Nietzsche's targets in *SE* are not particular instruction methods or curricula, but a series of intellectual, social and cultural trends. His core complaint is that existing pedagogical practices limit and warp the potential of individuals and of society, producing only "the scholar or the civil servant or the money-maker or the cultural philistine, or finally and more usually, a compound of them all" (*SE* 6, p.175). This is echoed in later work: *Twilight of the Idols* laments the loss of "a noble education [vornehme Erziehung]" in favour of a "most ambiguous mediocrity" that churns out state functionaries (*TI* "What the Germans Lack" 5). *SE* presents the philosopher as both an index for such trends and a potentially transformative

rejoinder to them – and this allows Nietzsche to treat the socio-cultural question via the question of philosophical education (*SE* 2, p.133; 3, p.137; 4, p.147). Specifically, *SE* seeks to establish how Schopenhauer’s “example should produce its full effect, so that the philosopher should again educate philosophers” (*SE* 7, p.177). My concern is with this process. I argue that the subsequent question of how such philosophers might re-orientate society at large plays a very much secondary role in the text; I suggest that Nietzsche’s later work might fill that gap.

The Contemporary Pedagogical Landscape: Modern Threats to Education

I want to begin with Nietzsche’s view of the existing cultural and pedagogical landscape. It is possible to read many of Nietzsche’s early writings, from the 1872 Basel lectures through ‘Homer’s Contest’ to *SE*, as reflections on “[h]ow wretched we modern men appear when compared with the Greeks and Romans even in the matter of a serious understanding of the tasks of education” (*SE* 2, p.131). Other issues are routinely viewed through this lens. For example, *HL* introduces the difficulty posed by history precisely as a pedagogical one: “for modern man ‘educated’ and ‘historically educated’ seem[...]to differ only verbally (*HL* 4, p.79).

What exactly are the problems besetting modern pedagogy? Some of Nietzsche’s complaints are familiar. He worries about commercial pressures, about “a speedy education so that one may quickly become a money-earning being” (*SE* 6, p.165): we find similar fears even in a thinker as different as Russell.⁶ Others rest on his broader political philosophy. For example, Nietzsche presents the state as only “furthering culture in order to further itself” (*SE* 6, p.174): the argument is that any state that did recognize cultural achievement as a good distinct from its own existence would diminish its ability to survive and be out-competed by those with a narrower view.⁷ But the aspect of *SE*’s jeremiad most relevant here is the claim

that one of the main threats to education lurks within the very institutions that should promote it. As he puts it: “the scholarly classes [*gelehrten Stände*] are no longer lighthouses or refuges in the midst of this turmoil[...]. Everything, contemporary art and science included, serves the coming barbarism” (*SE* 4, pp.148-9 – translation modified). To understand the significance of Nietzsche’s argument, it will help to juxtapose him with another figure who, less than a century earlier, had demanded a “swift revolution” in pedagogy, Immanuel Kant.⁸

Kant and Nietzsche share a starting point: both see society as threatened by deep tendencies towards laziness and timidity, leading to the suppression of individuality. Indeed, as Lemm recently observed, the opening of *SE* clearly echoes Kant’s ‘What is Enlightenment?’ which similarly blames indolence and cowardice for preventing individuals from thinking for themselves (*Auf.* 8:35).⁹ The result is people like “factory products” (*SE* 1, p.127), or what Kant called “tame cattle” [*Hausvieh*] (*Auf* 8:35). Since 1872, Nietzsche has stressed the link between such psychological problems and the pedagogical environment: “Any true independence the student may have[...]the teacher reprimands and rejects in favour of what is unoriginal, conformist, and respectable” (*KSA* 1, p.680). But to really grasp *SE*’s originality, we must locate it in relation to the Enlightenment’s own response to such worries – and to do that we need to look more closely at Kant’s position.

‘What is Enlightenment?’ offers a very specific answer to the problem of conformism: each individual should think of themselves as a “scholar” [*Gelehrter*] (*Auf.* 8:38). *SE* aims to unpack the institutional and psychological reality of this ideal: whatever Kant’s intentions might have been in praising “the scholar”, Nietzsche is clear that, as modelled by Kant’s own life, it is in reality an irreparably compromised role.¹⁰ But Nietzsche is not simply using Kant as an example here. His point is that Kant already serves as an example for *others*: “his example has produced above all university professors and professorial philosophy” (*SE* 3, p.137). Exemplarity is thus not simply *SE*’s preferred

solution, it is part of its diagnosis of the problem: if “it is not through knowledge but through practice and through a model that we become ourselves”, then the wrong model will be as significant as the right one (*KSA* 9:7 [213]). So, what exactly are the problems Kant represents?

Kant is the prime case of the “scholar” who, as such, “can never become a philosopher” even given the “inborn pressure of his genius” (*SE* 7, p.181). Institutionally, the professionalisation of philosophy leads to subservience to the state, and that, as noted, is antithetical to culture: “Kant was, as we scholars are accustomed to be, cautious, subservient and, in his attitude towards the state, without greatness: so that, if university philosophy should ever be called to account, he at any rate could not justify it” (*SE* 8, p.184). This is exacerbated by the psychological effects of academic life. On the one hand, it produces a “great myopia”, as cultural questions are replaced by specialist or technical ones (*SE* 6, p.170). Again, Nietzsche directly implicates Kant. Contemporary professors “have been content to assert that they are really no more than the frontier guards and spies of the sciences; to which end they are especially served by the teachings of Kant” (*SE* 8, p.188). On the other, it fosters a pernicious love of the “dialectical question-and-answer game” whereby participants pretend to disinterested inquiry whilst being truly driven by a mix of pleasure, power and politics: they are “motivated to the discovery of certain ‘truths’, motivated that is by [their] subjection to certain ruling persons, castes, opinions, churches, governments” (*SE* 6, pp.169-170). Finally, and perhaps most fundamentally for Nietzsche, the scholar is prey to a particularly pernicious form of conformity since he or she is conditioned to seek “recognition by fellow scholars, fear of lacking their recognition[...]. All the members of the guild keep a very jealous watch on one another” (*SE* 6, p.172). The reality of the scholar is thus the inverse of Kant’s ideal on which they write not for a narrow coterie but for “the real public (i.e. the world at large)” (*Auf.* 8:38).¹¹

Underpinning these psychological dangers is Nietzsche's use of a more sophisticated model of conformity than Kant's own. It is not simply a matter of conformity conflicting with individuality, or laziness with freedom. Rather, such laziness operates partly by appropriating the rhetoric of individuality and autonomy: "even the best" succumb to attractions of the contemporary "Zeitgeist", of "modish 'culture'" and "public acclamation" when the alternative is to recognize their "second or third rank" standing in relation to true genius. "The Zeitgeist whispers insinuatingly: 'Follow me and do not go there! For there you are only servants, assistants, instruments...slaves, indeed as automata'" (SE 6, p.176). Conformity is thus presented as freedom, as an alternative to being a "slave" or "automaton". The Kantian rhetoric of free inquiry will accordingly systematically produce conformism whenever large number of secondary talents study true genius – from an early Nietzschean point of view, effectively the definition of the university.

This does not exhaust Nietzsche's criticisms. The famous "crooked and humped back" of the scholar, the hump that will reappear in GS 366, is also present (SE 2, p.132), and there is a related attack on the scholar as cold and lacking in empathy (SE 6, p.174). It is hard not to think that Kant again plays an exemplary role in Nietzsche's mind here. But what I hope is now visible is that Nietzsche uses the Kantian model of the scholar to articulate the dangers present within the current pedagogical system. The irony is that the independent space of academic inquiry that Kant sought to carve out in *Conflict of the Faculties* has itself been exposed as a significant danger (SF 7:20). Part of SE's originality lies therefore in identifying an interlinked series of psychological and institutional problems *within* contemporary education: the threats are internal, rather than merely external to the education system. Once we see its reality, the life of the scholar, as exemplified by Kant, is exposed as very much part of the problem.

A Pedagogy of Exemplars: Seneca, Erasmus and Kant

Since the 1872 Basel lectures, Nietzsche has seen a radical pedagogical overhaul as unavoidable: “How long do you think today’s schools will persist in the educational practices that weigh so heavily upon you?[...]Their time is past, their days are numbered” (*KSA* 1, p.673). It will, however, require “an unspeakable amount of effort[...]to exchange the idea behind our present system of education[...]for a new fundamental idea” (*SE* 6, p.175). At the core of *SE* is an attempt to ground this “new fundamental idea” on the use of exemplars, specifically Schopenhauer (*SE* 1, p.130). The first task is thus to identify such models: “[W]here are we, scholars and unscholarly, high placed and low, to find the moral exemplars and models among our contemporaries, the visible epitome of morality for our time?” (*SE* 2, p.132). Once that is done, we must show how they ground a new pedagogy: “The hardest task still remains: to say how a new circle of duties may be derived from this ideal[...] – in short, to demonstrate that this ideal educates” (*SE* 5, p.156). In fact, it will prove easier to consider these tasks in the reverse order. I begin by asking how exactly an ideal “educates” in *SE*: this occupies this section and the next. Once that is in place, I return to how such figures are identified.

The use of exemplars as guides to conduct is as old as philosophy itself. I am going to argue, however, that Nietzsche’s model of exemplarity is highly distinctive. To see this, it will help to introduce some influential comparison cases.

Exemplar-based theories standardly distinguish mere imitation from some more sophisticated stance. Erasmus’ famous *Ciceronianus*, for example, separates crude copying of Cicero’s style from his own preferred approach that recognizes that “the most Ciceronian person is the one least like Cicero”.¹² Kant provides one of the canonical modern formulations of the issue, separating imitation [*Nachahmung*] from emulation [*Nachfolge*]: the latter is a positive, transformative engagement with an earlier model (*KU*5:283;318). As

he puts it, “[a]n example is not for imitating [Nachahmung], though it is certainly for emulation [Nachfolge]” (V-Mo/Collins 27:334). It is natural to align Nietzsche’s position, as Owens does, with “Nachfolge” rather than “Nachahmung”: who, after all, regards an imitative relationship as ideal?¹³ But other authors, including Erasmus, also make the point by talking of positive and negative versions of “imitation” [imitatio], and even Kant distinguishes imitation from “apeing” [Nachäffung] (KU 5:318).¹⁴ So, for the moment, I will speak simply of “positive responses to exemplarity”: highly valued and sophisticated relationships to the exemplar, such as Kant’s “Nachfolge”, that transcend ‘mere’ imitation.

Let’s now look more closely at how the modern canon has understood such positive responses. As Pigman notes, Renaissance treatments such as Erasmus’ typically hung on two metaphors: the digestive and the apian.¹⁵ Each appeals to: (i) the use of multiple sources, and (ii) the transformation of these sources and ideally of the pupil. Here is Erasmus using the digestive model to distinguish legitimate and illegitimate forms of imitation: “I approve an imitation that is not limited to one model[...]an imitation which excerpts from all authors, or at any rate from the most eminent, and[...]which transfers what it finds into the mind itself, as into the stomach, so that transfused into the veins it appears to be a birth of one’s intellect”.¹⁶ The reworking of multiple sources thus changes both the pupil, as she incorporates them into himself, and the original input as it is digested. On Erasmus’ ideal this digestion will be so thorough that “a reader will not even recognize Cicero as model”.¹⁷

Similar strategies marking off ‘bad’ imitation are also found in the Classical texts that the Renaissance itself was imitating. For example, here is Seneca using the apian metaphor: “We too should imitate the bees; we should separate whatever we have gathered from diverse reading[...]we should mix those various sips into one taste, so that even if where it has been taken from appears, it will nevertheless appear other than where it has been taken from”.¹⁸ Again, a positive use of exemplars draws on multiple sources, transforming them in the

process. Unlike the digestion metaphor, there is less stress on a change in the consumer; as in Erasmus' ideal, though, the original source is rendered unrecognisable.

Nietzsche was of course familiar with these traditions, and he invokes them to reject mere copying: "manners, thoughts, etc. can be accepted through imitation [Nachahmung], but one cannot create anything. A culture that chases after [nachläuft] the Greek cannot create anything. True, the creator can borrow from all sides and nourish himself[...]Only as creators we will be able to have something from the Greeks" (*WPh KSA* 8: 7 [1], p.121). As Regent observes, this exactly echoes the digestive model.¹⁹ But to fully appreciate Nietzsche's originality, we need a third contrast: given his central role, both in popularising the Nachahmung/Nachfolge distinction and in *SE* itself, I will use Kant. I am not claiming that Nietzsche was aware of all the details that follow, but they provide a useful foil. Since Kant lacks Nietzsche's specific conception of cultural exemplars, I focus on moral exemplarity, the closest analogue.

Kant's discussion of the pedagogical use of moral exemplars is defined by two basic moves. On the one hand, the practice is important, particularly in engaging the pupil's interest. Indeed, he puzzles over why "educators of young people have not long since searched through the biographies of ancient and modern times[...]in order to have at hand instances for the duties presented" (*KpV* 5:154).²⁰ Even with adult learners, morality "needs to be represented through something visible (sensible)", cast in "human guise" (*Relig.* 6:192; 64-5n). Furthermore, examples show that the desired behavior is actually possible and are a source of hope (*GMS* 4:409); Nietzsche's monumental historian will make a similar observation (*HL* 2, p.69). On the other hand, however, any *foundational* role for exemplary individuals is strictly prohibited by Kant. There are two points here. One is conceptual: "groping by means of examples" begs the question of how we know that the exemplary individual is good (*GMS* 4:412). Even "the Holy One of the Gospel must first be compared

with our ideal of moral perfection before he is cognized as such" (GMS 4:408). The other is psychological: Kant believes that inter-personal comparison generates a competitive dynamic, fostering envy [Neid], when we believe the exemplar better than us, or ridicule, when we believe ourselves superior (Päd. 9:491). In short, when Kant states that "imitation [Nachahmung] has no place at all in matters of morality," he aims to rule out not only slavish copying, but *any* attempt to derive fundamental normative orientation from an individual – even from Christ (GMS 4:409).²¹

With these contrasts in place, we can now turn back to Nietzsche's account of his own relationship to Schopenhauer. I will argue that it rests on a distinctively Nietzschean vision of exemplarity and its role in education process.

How an Ideal Educates: Schopenhauer as Liberator, Mirror and Template

As I see it, *SE*'s pedagogical theory has three aspects: the exemplar serves as liberator, as mirror and as a template for certain 'practices of life'. I analyse these in turn.

Most obviously, Nietzsche locates Schopenhauer within a liberatory model of education: the pedagogical task is to remove the impediments preventing the full expression of the individual. "Your true educators and formative teachers reveal to you that the true, original meaning and basic stuff of your nature is completely incapable of being educated or formed; your educators can be only your liberators[...]. Culture is liberation, the removal of all the weeds, rubble and vermin that want to attack the tender buds of the plant" (*SE* 1, p.129). The horticultural metaphor is one of Nietzsche's favourites, but its use here is markedly different from later texts such as *D* or *GS*. Recall the famous injunction in *GS*: "To 'give style' to one's character – a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses that their nature has to offer and then fit them into an artistic plan[...]. Here a great mass of second nature has been added; there a piece of first nature

removed” (*GS* 290). In this passage, Nietzsche stresses the alterability of much “first nature”; in *D*, he blames opposition to this insight on the pernicious “doctrine of the unchangeability of character” (*D* 560). *GS*’s claim is not that such alteration is always possible: Nietzsche also talks of how “the ugly that could not be removed” might be concealed or sublimated (*GS* 290). But *GS* undoubtedly prioritizes character modifications broadly construed, deliberately undertaken by the individual “through long practice” and in line with an “artistic plan”.²³ Sometimes these changes will be direct acts of ‘pruning’, at other times subtler reinterpretative or contrastive techniques are employed: for example, when the material “is vague and resisted shaping” (*GS* 290). In both cases, however, nature is to be stylized (*GS* 290). In contrast in *SE*, the model is closer to the “brick wall” that absolutely resists shaping in texts like *BGE*. “Learning transforms us, it acts like all other forms of nourishment that do not just ‘preserve’ –: as physiologists know. But at our foundation, ‘at the very bottom,’ there is clearly something that will not learn [etwas Unbelehrbares], a brick wall of spiritual fatum, of predetermined decisions and answers to selected, predetermined questions” (*BGE* 231). On this picture, there is a fundamental aspect of the self that cannot be modified. Reacting against the threat of social conformity, *SE* assigns extremely high value to this: “completely incapable of being educated or formed”, it marks each individual as a “unique miracle” (*SE* 1, p.129,127).²⁵ The horticultural metaphor in *SE* thus differs decisively: it is not, as in *GS*, the *agent* who is to be pruned or shaped. Rather, it is *weeds* that must be cut back so that the plant, the agent, can emerge in its distinctive and pre-set form. In short, *SE* embeds the idea of “etwas Unbelehrbares” within a liberatory pedagogy in which education removes the impediments preventing its full manifestation.

How exactly does this liberation take place and what role do exemplars play? The answer is again very far from the deliberate stylisation of *GS* 290. Nietzsche presents the individual’s first encounter with an exemplar as unexpected, disorientating, intoxicating.

Socialised amidst the commercial, political and intellectual barbarism discussed, she encounters here “something inexpressible of which happiness and truth are only idolatrous counterfeits...[T]he earth loses its gravity” (*SE* 4, p.155). Simultaneously, there is an intense surge of energy and recognition: Nietzsche talks of “the first, as it were physiological, impression Schopenhauer produced upon me, that magical outpouring of the inner strength of one natural creature on to another” (*SE* 2, p.136). This drives an immediate commitment and reorientation: on having read a single page of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche already knew that he would “pay heed to every word he ever said” (*SE* 2, p.133).

This affective rush is intended to capture the phenomenology of Nietzsche’s own experience and to explain how individuals might be jolted out of conformity by encountering an exemplar. However, without further development, “[o]ne might[...]think it nothing but an intoxicating vision granted us only for moments at a time[...]. And so we have seriously to ask the definite question: is it possible[...]that it educates us while it draws us aloft? (*SE* 5, p.156). The structure of the experience needs further analysis, in other words, if we are to offer a robust account of how it might educate. It is here that the other metaphor, that of mirroring enters.

Nietzsche experienced his first encounter with Schopenhauer as one of “seeing a mirror in which I glimpsed the world, life and my own soul in terrible magnification”.²⁶ As the epigram from Petrarch at the start of this article shows, the metaphor is a traditional one. But Nietzsche uses it in a highly distinctive fashion, linked to his concerns with history and its transcendence. I will highlight three aspects of this.

First, the *epistemic* role of the exemplar. *SE* begins with a move familiar from later Nietzsche texts: self-knowledge comes not via introspection, but by looking outside ourselves (*SE* 1, p.129). As he puts it years later, “the psychologist must look away from *himself* in order to see at all” (*TI* I.35). As Katsafanas observes, this is *prima facie* puzzling: “On the

face of it, this is an astonishing claim. I want to attain knowledge of myself, yet I am told to look away from myself in order to do so”.²⁷ *SE*’s answer might be put like this: self-*knowledge* is relatively easy; what is difficult is *self*-knowledge. The “knowledge” aspect is relatively easy since: “everything bears witness to what we are, our friendships and enmities, our glance and the clasp of our hand, our memory and that which we do not remember, our books and our handwriting” (*SE* 1, p.129). Thus, to know oneself one need only study these objects, particularly those we have loved (*SE* 1, p.129). The difficult part is ensuring that they reflect the “true, original meaning and basic stuff of your nature”, rather than mere social pressures. Insofar as she is profoundly committed to the exemplar, the youthful soul can therefore see herself mirrored in it: “Let the youthful soul look back on life with the question: what have you truly loved up to now, what has drawn your soul aloft, what has mastered it and at the same time blessed it? Set up these revered objects before you and perhaps their nature and their sequence will give you a law, the fundamental law of your own true self” (*SE* 1, p.129). The relationship to the exemplar thereby provides a mirror in which I can understand myself. I will return to how we know the love eulogised in *SE* 1 is genuine in the final section.

Second, the exemplar plays a *diagnostic* role insofar as it reflects back not just the pupil but also society at large: thus, Schopenhauer functions as a “mirror of his age”, a formulation that Nietzsche quickly merges with talk of “our age”. “Through Schopenhauer we are all able to educate ourselves against our age – because through him we possess the advantage of really knowing this age” (*SE* 4, p.146). We see in Schopenhauer’s writings and in his subsequent reception a chart of the cultural context and failures of the period: the great individual’s struggles against his time condense and so makes visible that time’s sensitivities, commitments, biases and shortcomings (*SE* 3, pp.145-6).

Third, this same mirroring encourages the viewer to *transcend* the age by offering a glimpse of another, “untimely”, life, one which speaks to the as yet unliberated true self of the pupil. This works on multiple levels. The pupil-exemplar relationship is reflective in both the literal and the conceptual sense: by allowing us to see what we value represented in another and thus at a certain distance, mirroring allows a clearer assessment of our situation. As Ridley puts it, the exemplar “provides occasion for an audience to reflect upon itself[...]and then, at least, potentially, to live differently, or to think about itself differently, as a result”.²⁸ But it is also inherently an affective process, not one of detachment. Conant rightly stressed the role productive shame plays in Nietzsche’s story.²⁹ Through the relation with the exemplar, the pupil becomes “ashamed of herself without any accompanying feeling of distress[...]one comes to hate one’s own narrowness and shriveled nature. (*SE* 6, p.163). It is because we glimpse our inner self in the mirror image that it both condemns our existing world and models “another and higher life” (*SE* 4, p.153). Whilst shame is central, though, it is not the whole story. There are points at which the pupil’s identification with the exemplar is evidently meant to provide encouragement, even consolation: it is Nietzsche’s own anxieties that are in play as much as Schopenhauer’s when he notes that such a genius necessarily finds little favour (*SE* 7, pp.178-99). There is also a key role for anger. Nietzsche aims to spur a visceral indignation, using Schopenhauer’s struggles to make the reader into one of those “men who feel it as their own distress when they see the genius involved in toilsome struggle, or in danger of destroying himself” (*SE* 6, pp.176-7). In short, “it is necessary for us to get really angry for once in order that things shall get better. And to encourage us to that we have the Schopenhauerian image of man” (*SE* 4, p.152). The exemplar thus provides “images” not just of our own “true, original meaning” or of current society in all its inadequacy, but of the heroic figure themselves and of an alternate life for us, supported on both an affective and reflective level.

The final aspect of the exemplar I want to discuss is their role as a template for certain ‘practices of life’. As in all exemplar-based theories, Schopenhauer models virtuous character traits for his pupils: he shows Nietzsche how to be “simple and honest in thought and life” and “teaches him to distinguish between those things that really promote human happiness and those that only appear to do” (*SE* 2, p.133,142). Even Kant would not deny that an exemplar may teach duties (*Päd.* 9:488). But *SE* is much more innovative in the further claim that the exemplar models certain *practices for living*: we see in Schopenhauer’s biography a template for a life that can support philosophy in the current climate. Nietzsche’s exploration of the issue is presaged with the observation that: “Our Hölderlin and Kleist, and who knows who else besides, were ruined by their uncommonness and could not endure the climate of so-called German culture” (*SE* 3, p.138). The question of ‘how one lives as a philosopher’ is of course central to Nietzsche’s thought: consider his meditations on the way in which the ascetic life proved both protection and prison (*GM* 3/3). In cataloguing the minutiae of Schopenhauer’s biography, he is attempting to develop a concrete template of the philosophical life.

In doing this, Nietzsche is again using exemplarity in a distinctive way. As Lyons notes, the hero typically presents an “excess” that threatens to complicate any lessons: why is Jesus’ choice of male disciples exemplary but that of Jewish ones or those who ate a particular diet not so?³⁰ “Monumental history” resolves the problem by suppressing aspects of the exemplar, dealing in “approximations and generalities” to render the individual “monumentally, that is to say as something exemplary and worthy of imitation” (*HL* 2, p.70). Nietzsche’s response in *SE* is to *invert* the monumental tradition, focusing on the minutiae of Schopenhauer’s life rather than his achievements. By the end we know that Schopenhauer was a devoted pet owner with no close friends, living on a modest income, although one that allowed him to go “unoppressed by the petty necessities of life”, experienced in the import-

export business, with a father who had travelled widely and favored a “rugged manliness” and a mother marred by “cultural pretension” (*SE* 3, p.139; *SE* 7, pp.180-1). This is partly an aspect of the affective dimension discussed above: in humanising Schopenhauer, Nietzsche intensifies and articulates his commitment. But it is also a way of articulating a template for a philosophical *life*: rather than imitating the deeds of a hero, the task is to establish a set of conditions under which a certain kind of individual can realise themselves. It is not the case that the pupil will necessarily be able to match these conditions: few can control how much their father travelled or their mother’s cultural preferences. But we nevertheless have a concrete image of a daily form of existence that genuinely supported philosophy, a picture substantive enough to offer a clear contrast with the scholar model and at least some of whose lessons, such as the importance of maintaining institutional independence, can be applied directly by the pupil.

I have argued that Nietzsche has a distinctive and sophisticated understanding of the role played by the exemplar: this is articulated by the liberation, mirroring and template claims. To grasp just how distinctive the resultant picture is, it is time to return to the contrast cases I introduced above.

For Nietzsche, the “supreme fulfillment of our existence” lies in becoming “Schopenhauerian men” ourselves (*SE* 5, p.161). We should not downplay such turns of phrase. They are tied to the mirroring model: we are meant to *recognize* ourselves in Schopenhauer, to be able to imitate to a significant degree his practices of life, and so free our “unchangeable” selves (*SE* 1, p.129). Schopenhauer himself must likewise remain unchanged in that he serves as an independent check on us and on the age. *SE*’s romanticism also means that it concentrates overwhelmingly on a single exemplar: neither Goethe nor Rousseau is an object of “love” in the way Schopenhauer is (*SE* 6, p.163). All of these traits set Nietzsche’s position at odds with the Renaissance models discussed above. Those stressed parity among a

range of sources (Seneca's "diverse readings"), and the transformation of both pupil and exemplar: the pupil insofar as she digests the input so changing herself; the exemplar insofar as she is mixed with other sources and with the pupil to the point of unrecognizability. At a crude level, of course, both Nietzsche and someone like Erasmus see the process as transformative. But in Nietzsche this transformation is a *liberation* of a pre-existing self, not its alteration, and relies on a delicate balance between recognizing myself in the exemplar and maintaining it as an independent check. On Erasmus's ideal, as Pigman observed, "a reader will not even recognize Cicero as model": *SE* in contrast is a paean to Schopenhauer, not an attempt to cover his influence.³¹

There are also extensive differences from the Kantian picture. *SE* makes an exemplar the fundamental point of normative orientation in a way Kant never would. Beneath this headline, there are other important points of contact and divergence. First, for both Kant and Nietzsche, the young are best placed to use exemplars. For Nietzsche, as Jonas has stressed, this is because they retain an openness later lost under social pressure (*SE* 1, p. 127).³² In contrast for Kant, it is because their powers are "still uncultivated [*ungebildet*]", and so they need simple guidance: truly transformative change, in contrast, is reserved for the more mature (Kant tends to set the age at around forty: MM 5:152, Anth. 7:294). Second, both Kant and Nietzsche oppose the "monumental" approach. For Nietzsche, the daily details of Schopenhauer's life, rather than his philosophical claims, take centre stage. For Kant monumentality is also dangerous: it masks the conditions under which individuals live as good parents or neighbors rather than great heroes (KpV 5:155). Yet the two differ radically on the contingencies, the apparently trivial details of the exemplar's times, that emerge once monumental history is discarded. Indeed, for Kant, it is partly this that makes exemplars inadequate. To turn "what at best can only serve as an example[...]into [a basis for morality] would make of virtue something which changes according to time and circumstance"

(KrV:A315/B37). For Nietzsche in *SE*, in contrast, it is the fact that Schopenhauer is simultaneously timely *and* untimely, in line with the mirroring metaphor, that makes him so effective as a diagnostic, transformational and practical instrument: his life and struggles both condense and make visible the cultural biases and shortcomings of his time and point beyond them as detailed above, affectively, reflectively and in providing a practical template. Third, Nietzsche uses the exemplar to offer an account of self-knowledge radically different from Kant's: the pupil comes to know himself in loving another, the exemplar. Kant in contrast talked of the need for a program of introspection, a "descent into the hell of self-cognition" (MM 6:441).³³ Finally, Nietzsche clearly envisages a relationship to the exemplar that avoids Kant's options of envy or ridicule: to identify as a "Schopenhauerian man" is to articulate both a deep affective bond of "love" and a recognition of kinship (*SE* 6, p.163).

Education Institutions and the Identification of the Exemplar

Nietzsche described *SE* as tackling a "problem of education without equal" (*EH*, Untimely Ones 3). I have argued that his solution rests on a distinctive pedagogy of exemplars. I want to close with two questions. The first concerns the institutional implications of Nietzsche's arguments; the second, the initial identification of the exemplar.

The 1872 Basel lectures are marked by almost violent frustration with "our educational institutions":

How much courage can I, as one lone teacher, have when I know full well that the steamroller of pseudo-education will crush every seed of true education I cast? (KSA 1, p.671)

Yet those same lectures still exhibit striking optimism about the *significance* of institutional pedagogy. For example, Lecture IV lists a range of exemplars, clearly intending to evoke the kind of productive shame Conant highlights in *SE*: "Do you dare speak Schiller's name

without blushing?” (*KSA* 1, p.724). What is striking is that Nietzsche immediately presents such exemplars as undermined by their lack of institutional support: “Who can imagine what these heroic men might have accomplished if the true German spirit had been able to spread its sheltering roof above their heads in the form of strong institutions?— the spirit that, without such institutions, drags out its isolated, ruined, degenerate existence” (*KSA* 1, p.725). In *SE*, in contrast, the institution, as exemplified by the Kantian scholar, figures primarily as a source of danger, of co-option by the state and the “guild” of academic life. Schopenhauer is exemplary *because* of his lack of institutional status, not *despite* it.

This shift is well illustrated by the role of love, love for “some great man” which can “alone” consecrate an individual to culture (*SE* 6, p.163). This key condition for education in *SE* “cannot be taught” (*SE* 6, p.163). By extension, such education cannot be achieved by organised instruction. This result meshes well with Lemm’s observation that *SE* talks positively not of “*lehren*” but “*pflanzen*” and “*anbauen*”, of planting and cultivation. “The fact that Nietzsche does not use the term *lehren* (to teach) suggests that culture is not taught at schools or universities but, rather, is cultivated aside, in separation from and against institutionalized forms of what might be referred to as official culture”.³⁴ In fact, the argument can be pushed further. There is a natural tendency to locate Nietzschean exemplars within an agonistic framework: elsewhere, he warns against views of genius that undermine competition by casting a Shakespeare as divinely gifted (*HH* I,162). But *SE* is noteworthy for avoiding such agonal formulations. Lachance puts the point well: “One must remark that the young Nietzsche’s relationship to Schopenhauer, as he describes it in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, does not seem to be coined by agonistics. He seems to blend with his educator, as the following passage reveals: ‘I understood him as if he had written for me’”.³⁵ Lachance suggests that the real *agon* in *SE* is between Nietzsche and “the academic world”.³⁶ But this is not quite right either: Nietzschean *agon* requires more than struggle, it requires some notion

of respect lacking here. It is better to say that *SE* is an attempt to model education without appeal to the *agon* and thus without dependence on the specific cultural institutions which made it possible in ancient Greece. If ‘On the Future of Our Educational Institutions’ sought to reinvigorate distinctively German institutions and ‘Homer’s Contest’ sought to revive the Greek pedagogical framework, *SE* offers an individualised, *non-institutional* alternative, one that might operate even in the absence of those other frameworks.³⁷

SE’s model of a non-institutional pedagogy is also a highly targeted and thus relatively narrow one: it explains how “the philosopher should again educate philosophers” (*SE* 7, p.177). But it says little on how this mechanism might apply to other forms of education – the education of politicians, say. If their task too is to escape cultural degeneration by undergoing a normative and affective re-orientation that opens them to their true natures, then the exemplar method should work just as well – but the truth of that conditional, from a Nietzschean or non-Nietzschean perspective, is obviously another matter. I think it is best to treat *SE* as highlighting such questions, rather than resolving them: it offers a pedagogy designed for a specific purpose and context and, in asking about its generalization, we effectively open a new debate about social roles in early Nietzsche, a debate that would also require treatment of the different types of knowledge education might offer. The text also says little on how such philosophers might in turn educate the general population. This issue is linked to that of elitism as discussed in the opening section: we need to know what exactly separates the philosopher from the others, and how porous those boundaries are. It is also a question we can track through Nietzsche’s later work – devices such as genealogy are attempts to provide an answer. The aim of the current article is not to provide a complete analysis of these issues, but a robust account of *SE*’s cornerstone: the exemplary relationship between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

The final issue concerns how the exemplar is first identified. Again, Kant provides a useful way to motivate the issue. The basic problem with exemplar-based theories, he argues, is that selecting an exemplar assumes principles in terms of which the exemplar can be assessed (GMS 4:408). This challenge stands even if “principles” lacks its full Kantian weight: some explanation is needed as to why one person rather than another qualifies as exemplary. Nietzsche’s answer in *SE* is clear: it is love that binds pupil and master (*SE* 6, p.163). As discussed, Nietzsche conceptualises this attachment as a sudden, phenomenologically and physiologically intense connection (*SE* 2, p.136). It is an encounter in which one is chosen, rather than chooses: hence his almost mystical description of first encountering Schopenhauer, where it is as if a “daemon whispered to me”.³⁸ But could such love be mistaken? Could we erroneously think we love someone? Or could love somehow fail to yield the “fundamental law of our true self”? To be told that we select an exemplar through love simply defers Kant’s original worry: why is that a good basis? To put the point another way, we have been told that the key to education lies in the educator. But how do I recognize him or her?

One striking feature of *SE* is the absence of any sustained discussion of these worries. The account of love offered is close to the “cataleptic” model Nussbaum traces through Stoicism to Proust: the phenomenology of the emotion is such that it simply commands assent, beyond any doubt.³⁹ The demonic whisper brooks no debate. But, in contrast to Nussbaum’s Proust, *SE* says little about the internal architecture of the feeling to explain why the demand cannot be an illusory one. *SE* is thus vulnerable to debunking accounts of love of the type which Nietzsche himself would later explore (for example, *GS* 14). The changes in Nietzsche’s views on love are beyond this piece. But it is hard not to note that both Schopenhauer and Wagner, the closest to exemplars he has at the time of *SE*, will ultimately be regarded by him with deep suspicion.⁴⁰

¹ F. Petrararch, *Rerum memorandarum libri*, ed. G. Billanovich (Florenz: Sansoni, 1945), 133.

² References are by section to the following translations: where the section is a long one, I also list the page number of the relevant translation. *BGE: Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. J. Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); *D: Daybreak*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); *EH: Ecce Homo* in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols*, trans. J. Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); *GS: The Gay Science*, trans. J. Nauckhoff (Cambridge University Press, 2001); *HH: Human, All Too Human*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); *HL: On the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life* in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); *SE: Schopenhauer as Educator* in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); *TI: The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols*, trans. J. Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁴ Rawls' original attack is in his *Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 325. Influential responses are offered in S. Cavell's *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990) and J. Conant, "Nietzsche's Perfectionism: A Reading of Schopenhauer as Educator" in *Nietzsche's Postmoralism*, ed. R. Schacht, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 181–257. For recent work on the debate see M. Jonas, "Advancing Equality and Individual Excellence: The Case of Nietzsche's Schopenhauer as Educator", *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 33 (2016), 173–192.; V. Lemm, "Is Nietzsche a Perfectionist? Rawls, Cavell, and the Politics of Culture in Nietzsche's Schopenhauer as Educator", *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 34 (2007), 5–27; and D. Rowthorn, "Nietzsche's Cultural Elitism", *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 47 (2017), 97–115. Jonas further develops his position in M. Jonas and D. Yacek, *Nietzsche's*

Philosophy of Education: Rethinking Ethics, Equality and the Good Life in a Democratic Age
(London: Routledge, 2019).

⁵ Rowthorn, “Nietzsche’s Cultural Elitism”, 109; Jonas and Yacek, *Nietzsche’s Philosophy of Education*, 102 (Jonas’ earlier “Advancing Equality and Individual Excellence” defends a very similar position).

⁶ For example, B. Russell, *On Education* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1930), 238.

⁷ Rowthorn, “Nietzsche’s Cultural Elitism”, 108.

⁸ AP 2:449. References to Kant’s works are to the standard *Akademie* volume and pagination of *Kants gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1900); for KrV, I use the standard A/B pagination. The following abbreviations are used:

AP – *Zwei Aufsätze, betreffend das Basedow’sche Philanthropinum* (Ak2)

Anth. – *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (Ak7)

Auf. – *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?* (Ak8)

Br. – *Briefe* (Ak10-13)

GMS – *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (Ak4)

KpV – *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (Ak5)

KrV – *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Ak3-4)

KU – *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Ak5)

MS – *Die Metaphysik der Sitten* (Ak6)

Päd. – *Über Pädagogik* (Ak9)

Relig. – *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* (Ak6)

SF – *Der Streit der Fakultäten* (Ak7)

V-Anth/Fried – *Vorlesungen Wintersemester 1775/1776 Friedländer* (Ak25)

V-Mo/Collins – *Moralphilosophie Collins* (Ak27)

⁹ V. Lemm, “Is Nietzsche a Perfectionist?”, 16-17.

¹⁰ I say “whatever Kant’s intentions might have been” since he envisages a model of scholarship located outside of any university setting, one every citizen can adopt (Auf. 8:38). In this sense, exactly as with Schopenhauer, *SE*’s interest is in what the reality of Kant’s *life* exemplified, rather than in his theories.

¹¹ Whilst Nietzsche’s main aim is to expose the reality of the “scholar”, he is by no means flatly opposed to the ideals it represents nor, given his background, is he able to distance himself from it entirely, occasionally speaking of “we scholars” (*SE* 8, p.84). He therefore sometimes presents the problem as one of better training for the scholar, enabling them to retain their “humanity” (*SE* 2, p.132); the contrast is with a Kantian approach on which “educated by science, that is to say by an inhuman abstraction”, they become “distorted and contorted” (*SE* 2, p.132). The simplest way to sum up would be to say that Nietzsche opposes the scholar as a specific institutional and psychological type, a type which garners support from ideals that Nietzsche might in other circumstances embrace himself. But matters are delicate because the question is tied to early Nietzsche’s stance on science: in the citations above, it is science that is to blame and the challenge would be reconstructing a vision of the scholar either free of science or free of science’s modern form. This challenge is central to later texts. Consider *GS* 358 in this light: “If in connection with this last point one wanted to give [the Reformation] the credit for having prepared and favored what we today honor as ‘modern science’, one must surely add that it also shares the blame for the degeneration of the modern scholar, for his lack of reverence, shame, and depth, for the whole naïve guilelessness and conventionality in matters of knowledge” (*GS* 358). Here the dual failings of “modern science” and the “modern scholar” go hand in hand. Nietzsche deliberately leaves room for another, joyful science, but whether the “scholar” can be saved is a separate question (in the immediate exegetical context, *GS* 366 would be key). More broadly, one would need to reckon with Nietzsche’s evolving attitudes to truth and to philology, often used as a symbol of scholarly practice (for example, *BGE* I 23, where the self-identification as “old philologist” is a mark of rigor).

¹² D. Erasmus, “The Ciceronians”, in *Collected Works of Erasmus, Vol. 28*, ed. and trans. Betty I. Knott (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 399.

¹³ D. Owen, “Nietzsche, Ethical Agency and the Problem of Democracy”, in *Nietzsche, Power and Politics*, ed. H. Siemens and V. Roodt (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 154.

¹⁴ Kant’s terminology is complicated by a well-known editorial issue whereby Kieseewetter, taking himself to have identified a “writing mistake” in the proofs of KU, substituted “*Nachmachung*” for “*Nachahmung*” at a crucial juncture (KU 5:309; Br., 11:138).

¹⁵ G.W. Pigman III, “Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance” *Renaissance Quarterly* 33 (1980), 1-32.

¹⁶ Erasmus, “The Ciceronians”, 406.

¹⁷ Pigman, “Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance”, 9.

¹⁸ Seneca, *Letters on Ethics*, ed. and trans. A. Long and M. Graver (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 285 (Letter 84.5).

¹⁹ N. Regent, “A ‘Wondrous Echo’: Burckhardt, Renaissance and Nietzsche’s Political Thought”, in *Nietzsche, Power and Politics*, ed. H. Siemens and V. Roodt (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 645.

²⁰ Such puzzlement is itself puzzling since so many Classical and Renaissance authors obviously did exactly this.

²¹ Similarly, in the *Anthropology*: “The imitator [Nachahmer] (in moral matters) is without character; for character consists precisely in originality in the way of thinking. He who has character derives his conduct from a source that he has opened by himself” (Anth. 7:293).

²³ One issue, beyond this paper, is how to reconcile what seems to be a very deliberate process in *GS* with Nietzsche’s later warnings that “[b]ecoming what you are presupposes that you do not have the slightest idea what you are” (*EH* ‘Why I Am So Clever’ 9).

²⁵ One might also hold that individuals are defined by an unchangeable core but that the core is not unique: perhaps there are only a few common “cores” available. This move is not made in *SE*, but its possibility prefigures Nietzsche’s later “doctrine of types” – for discussion of

that see B. Leiter, “On the Paradox of Fatalism and Self-Creation in Nietzsche”, in *Nietzsche*, ed. B. Leiter and W. Richardson (Oxford University Press, 2001), 281-321.

²⁶ F. Nietzsche, *Frühe Schriften 1854-1869*, ed. Hans Joachim Mette, Karl Schlechta and Carl Koch, Vol. 3 (Munich: Beck, 1994), 298.

²⁷ P. Katsafanas, “Kant and Nietzsche on Self-Knowledge”, in *Nietzsche and the Problem of Subjectivity*, ed. J. Constâncio, M.J. Mayer Branco, and B. Ryan (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 125.

²⁸ A. Ridley, *Nietzsche on Art and Literature* (London: Routledge, 2007), 101.

²⁹ J. Conant, “Nietzsche's Perfectionism: A Reading of Schopenhauer as Educator”, 205.

³⁰ J. Lyons, *Exemplum: The Rhetoric of Example in Early Modern France and Italy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 34.

³¹ Pigman, “Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance”, 9.

³² Jonas and Yacek, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Education*, 102.

³³ For a contrast between the Nietzschean and Kantian models of self-knowledge more broadly, see P. Katsafanas, “Kant and Nietzsche on Self-Knowledge”.

³⁴ Lemm, “Is Nietzsche a Perfectionist?”, 11.

³⁵ N. Lachance, “Nietzsche's Ethics of Reading: Education in a Postmodern World”, in *Nietzsche's Therapeutic Teaching*, ed. H. Hutter and E. Friedland (Bloomsbury, 2013), 35.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁷ I diverge here from Jonas and Yacek, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Education* which does appeal to an agonistic framework: see in particular, chapter 6.

³⁸ F. Nietzsche, *Frühe Schriften 1854-1869*, Vol. 3, 298.

³⁹ M. Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 265.

⁴⁰ I am indebted to the Editors and to the Journal's anonymous referees for their extremely helpful comments and suggestions: these have greatly improved the article.